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AN

ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

MASSACHUSETTS SOCIETY

FOR THE

Suppression of Intemperance,

MAY 31, 1827.

7587.77

BY CHARLES SPRAGUE.

"He, who the sword of Heaven will bear,
Should be as holy as severe;
More nor less to others paying,
Than by self-offences weighing.
Shame to him, whose cruel striking
Kills for faults of his own liking.
Twice treble shame on *Angelo*,
To weed my vice, and let his grow."

PRINTED BY REQUEST OF THE SOCIETY.

BOSTON,

BOWLES AND DEARBORN, 72, WASHINGTON STREET.

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Ap. 13, 1868.

DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, *to wit*:

District Clerk's Office.

BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the fifth day of June, A. D. 1827, in the fifty-first year of the Independence of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, *Bowles & Dearborn* of the said district, have deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof they claim as proprietors, in the words following, *to wit:* "AN ADDRESS Delivered before the MASSACHUSETTS SOCIETY for the SUPPRESSION OF INTEMPERANCE, May 31, 1827, by Charles Sprague.

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In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;" and also to an act entitled "An act supplementary to an act, entitled, an act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned; and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving and etching historical and other prints."

JNO. W. DAVIS, *Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.*

ADDRESS.

In discharging the duty which has been confided to me, I shall use great plainness of speech. The themes that lead to the pleasant fields of poetry, and tempt the wanderer to linger among the beautiful creations of fancy, are for other and happier seasons. The purpose for which we have assembled, awakening, as it does, so many painful associations, holds no communion with the bright regions of romance—we tread the cold, gray waste of reality. The hour before us is one of severe and fearful reflection; and it becomes him who has been selected to occupy it, to speak the words of truth and soberness.

We have met to mourn over a calamity which, like one of the plagues sent to curse ancient Egypt, has come "upon us, and upon our people, and into our houses, and into our bed-chambers," and is

desolating the land. We have met to bear our testimony against *Drunkenness*—and we call upon all good men to stand forth, and cheer us with their influence and example. We implore them as Christians, as Patriots, as Philanthropists, to join in the labour and the praise of extirpating a vice that has taken deep root in our nation, spreading to its remotest borders, and dropping in its loveliest paths the seeds of misery, disease and death.

The spectacle before us is indeed appalling. The victims of intemperance are wasting around us in frightful numbers. Neither sex, nor age, nor rank, nor talent, is unsubdued by the subtle destroyer. Man falls away from his glorious destiny, and woman is degraded from her angel station; the young bow their faces in the beauty of their promise, the mature are arrested in the pride of their usefulness, and the white locks of the old seek the tomb in disgrace; the rich are overcome in their splendid mansions, the poor in their dreary hovels; the arm of labour is paralyzed, the light of learning is extinguished; genius is struck down in his eagle career, and the holy functions of piety are defiled in the dust.

Friends—we may not sit in silence, while this devastation is going on. We have a duty to perform; and what we would do effectually, we must do unitedly. It is time for us to speak:—the ear that would be deaf to the kind whisper of individual

remonstrance, must hear the congregated voices of an alarmed community. Above all, it is time for us to act:—the sin that shrouds itself in the broad mantle of custom, custom must expose and destroy. A vast proportion of the cases of confirmed intemperance may be traced, not so much to any innate depravedness, as to the crafty workings of the unreproved usages of society; and we, who continue to follow these usages, even while we laugh at them, are ourselves more or less chargeable with the evils we lament over, and are bound to exert our efforts for the alleviation of them. I say, our efforts—not merely those which are exhausted in assembling to hear admonitory addresses, too often only criticised and forgotten—in showering abroad tracts, "that seem to pass off like a thick flight of snow, leaving no trace of their passage, and disappearing where they fall:"—these things, certainly, are not to be left undone, but if we would have them of any avail, something more must be done also. Least of all, can we rely on the unassisted arm of authority. We may invoke the laws, but we may as well invoke the dead. Laws can only operate when the mischief is done. Prevention is what we want—remedy utterly loses its character. Indeed, though we very properly punish the thief and the murderer, for crimes against which we all set our faces, with what consistency can we punish the drunkard, for an offence to which our own

daily practices naturally lead him? We do all *but* the deed, ourselves—we tread on the borders of the forbidden ground, and then angrily cry out for justice on him who goes one step further. "*Enforce the laws!*" exclaims some virtuously indignant citizen, as he beholds the *low-born* drunkard shaming the fair face of day—"*enforce the laws!*" and with these words on his lips, he coolly arranges the evening club, from the carousings of which, if he retires unexposed, it is because the shades of night do more for him than his own prudence. "*Suppress drinking-houses and Soda establishments*"—cries the anxious father, who shudders lest his son may drink there of the waters of death, which however he is not at all afraid to press upon his friends at home. "*Why does not government impose a tax on domestic spirits?*" is the inquiry of one, who sits at his loaded table, boasting of the age of his foreign liquors, and recounting the various voyages that have rendered them so exquisite. Truly, there is a little absurdity in these things. Besides, we *may* fine and imprison a poor wretch, now and then, for intoxication, but it will go only a little way to reduce the evil—it will not teach him temperance. We *may* lessen the number of dram-shops that pour forth their steams of abomination from every hole and corner—but we all know that many a man becomes a drunkard before he sets his foot within one—it will not teach *him* temperance.

We *may* call upon our rulers to lay heavy duties on imported and domestic liquors—but should they even be courageous enough to do so, it would only tempt the importer to become a smuggler, and instruct the distiller to outwit the exciseman—perhaps it might put money into the public treasury—*but it would not teach men temperance.* No! we must go beyond all this—we must first minister to ourselves. Before we revive old laws, we must abolish old customs. Before we appeal to the government, we must prove our sincerity by becoming our own legislators. The law we need is that which must speak in the unwritten majesty of Public Opinion. The people's virtue must enact it, and the people's practice must be its enforcement.

But it may be said that much which the friends of Temperance would abolish, is harmless; and that we need not debar ourselves from the innocent recreations of social and convivial life, simply because some are weak enough to pervert them. It is undoubtedly true, that we are not required to copy the macerating austerities of the monk's cell, for fear men should become gluttons, nor to dip our cup only in the hermit's spring, lest they should turn drunkards. Our Creator has not spread before us a bounteous table, merely to forbid our approach to it. Still, if we behold that there *are* many, weak enough to abuse these innocent recreations, and to whom an indulgence in them is *not* harmless—if our exam-

ple serves to encourage in others, practices which, we cannot deny, inevitably tend to their destruction—we have not the right, the moral right, to make them constant stumbling blocks in the path of those who have more feeling and less philosophy than ourselves. It becomes us, if not in common charity to set them entirely aside, at least, as well-wishers to society, to inquire how far we are justified in making them, as too many of us do, the daily test of hospitality, the unerring touchstone of friendship, the universal accompaniment of all social intercourse.

It is truly astonishing to behold how completely the habit of *unnecessary* drinking pervades the various classes of our community. In one way or another, it is their morning and evening devotion, their noonday and midnight sacrifice. From the highest grade to the lowest, from the drawing-room to the kitchen, from the gentleman to the labourer, down descends the universal custom. From those who sit long at the wine that has been rocked upon the ocean, and ripened beneath an Indian sky, down to to those who solace themselves with the fiery liquor that has cursed no other shores than our own—down, till it reaches the miserable abode, where the father and mother will have *rum*, though the children cry for *bread*—down to the bottom, even to the prison-house, the forlorn inmate of which hails him his best friend, who is cunning enough to convey to him, undiscovered, the all-consoling, the all-corroding poison.

Young men must express the warmth of their mutual regard, by daily and nightly libations at some fashionable hotel—it is the custom. The more advanced take turns in flinging open their own doors to each other, and the purity of their esteem is testified by the number of bottles they can empty together—it is the custom. The husband deems it but civil to commemorate the accidental visit of his acquaintance by a glass of ancient spirit, and the wife holds it a duty to celebrate the flying call of her companion with a taste of the latest *liqueur*—for this, also, is the custom. The interesting gossipry of every little evening coterie must be enlivened with the customary cordial. Custom demands that idle quarrels, perhaps generated over a friendly cup, another friendly cup must drown. Foolish wagers are laid, to be adjusted in foolish drinking—the rich citizen stakes a dozen, the poor one a dram. "The brisk minor panting for twenty-one," baptizes his new-born manhood in the strong drink to which he intends training it up. Births, marriages and burials are all hallowed by strong drink. Anniversaries, civic festivities, military displays, municipal elections, and even religious ceremonials are nothing without strong drink. The political ephemera of a little noisy day, and the colossus whose footsteps millions wait upon, must alike be apotheosised in liquor. A rough-hewn statesman is toasted at, and drank at, to his face in one place, while his boiste-

rous adversary sits through the same mummery in another. Here, in their brimming glasses, the adherents of some successful candidate mingle their congratulations, and there, in like manner, the partisans of his defeated rival forget their chagrin. Even the great day of national emancipation is, with too many, only a great day of drinking, and the proud song of deliverance is trouled from the lips of those, who are bending body and soul to a viler thraldom than that from which their fathers rescued them.

I need not swell the catalogue—it were a shorter task to tell where liquors do not abound, than where they do. And all these things would only wake a smile, but that their consequences make us sad, and ought to make us wise. Is it not here that the mischief we mourn over begins?—and if so, ought not the reformation to begin here also? Look back to the days of childhood. Call up round you the little groups that made your young hours happy. Follow them along, from year to year, as you and they grew older. Remember how this one and that one, the generous and the gifted, dropped off from your sides into the grave. Did not intemperance drag them down?—and was it not amid the innocent recreations of society that they were first ensnared? Cannot many a parent, many a wife, many a husband here find the source of days and nights of anguish? May we not select some youthful victim of excess, and trace him back, step

by step, to these *harmless* indulgences—these *innocent* recreations? Have we not seen

> "The young disease, that must subdue at length,
> "Grow with *their* growth, and strengthen with *their* strength?"

Could he repeat—alas! he cannot—his mind is sunk in his body's defilement—but *could* he for a moment shake off his lethargy, and repeat to us the story of his errors, as faithfully as he *looks* their odious consequences, he would tell us that to the *innocent* enjoyments of hospitality and festivity he owes his ruin—that the *warranted* indulgences of convivial life led the way to the habitual debauch, which has finally set upon him the seal whereby all men may know the drunkard. He would tell us that he was once worthy of a happier destiny—that he stepped on life's pathway, rejoicing in purity and hope—that he was blessed with a frame for vigorous action, and a heart for the world's endearing charities—that his eye loved the beauties of nature, and his spirit adored the goodness of nature's God. But, he would tell us, that in an evil hour, he found he had fallen, even before he knew he was in danger—that the customs of society had first enticed him, and then unfitted him for its duties—that the wreaths they had insidiously flung round him hardened to fetters, and he could not shake them off. He would tell us that over the first discovery of his fatal lapse, his alarmed parents wept, and he mingled his tears with theirs—that as he grew more unguarded in his offence, they raised the angry voice

of reproof, and he braved it in sullen silence—that as he became still more vile and brutish, kindred and friend turned their cold eyes away from him, and his expiring shame felt a guilty relief. He would tell us, that at length, just not hated, he has reached the lowest point of living degradation—that in his hours of frenzy he is locked up in the receptacle for the infamous, and in his lucid intervals let out, a moving beacon to warn the virtuous.—Could he anticipate the end of his unhappy story, he might tell us that yet a little while, and his short and wretched career will be ended—that the father who hung over his cradle, weaving bright visions of his son's future greatness, will feel a dreadful satisfaction as he gazes upon him in his coffin—that the mother who lulled him to sleep on her bosom, and joyed to watch his waking, will not dare to murmur that the sleep has come upon him, out of which on earth he will never awake—that the grave will be gladly made ready to receive him—that as, "while living," he forfeited "fair renown," so, "doubly dying," he must

"Go down
"To the vile dust from whence he sprung,
"Unwept, unhonoured, and unsung."

But deplorably as the frivolous usages of society show, in their effects upon the young, the prospect is doubly terrific, when we behold their ravages among the more mature. The common calamities of life may be endured. Poverty, sickness and even

death may be met—but there is that which, while it brings all these with it, is worse than all these together. When the husband and father forgets the duties he once delighted to fulfil, and by slow degrees becomes the creature of intemperance, there enters into his house the sorrow that rends the spirit—that cannot be alleviated, that will not be comforted.

It is here, above all, where she, who has ventured every thing, feels that every thing is lost. Woman, silent-suffering, devoted woman, here bends to her direst affliction. The measure of her wo is, in truth, full, whose husband is a drunkard. Who shall protect her, when *he* is her insulter, her oppressor? What shall delight her, when she shrinks from the sight of *his* face, and trembles at the sound of *his* voice? The hearth is indeed dark, that *he* has made desolate. There, through the dull midnight hour, her griefs are whispered to herself, her bruised heart bleeds in secret. There, while the cruel author of her distress is drowned in distant revelry, she holds her solitary vigil, waiting, yet dreading his return, that will only wring from her by his unkindness, tears even more scalding than those she sheds over his transgression. To fling a deeper gloom across the present, memory turns back, and broods upon the past. Like the recollection to the sun-stricken pilgrim, of the cool spring that he drank at in the morning, the joys of

other days come over her, as if only to mock her parched and weary spirit. She recalls the ardent lover, whose graces won her from the home of her infancy—the enraptured father, who bent with such delight over his new-born children—and she asks if *this* can really be him—this sunken being, who has now nothing for her but the sot's disgusting brutality—nothing for those abashed and trembling children, but the sot's disgusting example! Can we wonder, that amid these agonizing moments, the tender cords of violated affection should snap asunder? that the scorned and deserted wife should confess, "there is no killing like that which kills the heart?" that though it would have been hard for her to kiss for the last time the cold lips of her dead husband, and lay his body forever in the dust, it is harder to behold him so debasing life, that even his death would be greeted in mercy? Had he died in the light of his goodness, bequeathing to his family the inheritance of an untarnished name, the example of virtues that should blossom for his sons and daughters from the tomb—though she would have wept bitterly indeed, the tears of grief would not have been also the tears of shame. But to behold him, fallen away from the station he once adorned, degraded from eminence to ignominy—at home, turning his dwelling to darkness, and its holy endearments to mockery—abroad, thrust from the companionship of the worthy, a self-branded outlaw—this

is the wo that the wife feels is more dreadful than death,—that she mourns over as worse than widowhood.

There is yet another picture behind, from the exhibition of which I would willingly be spared. I have ventured to point to those who daily force themselves before the world, but there is one whom the world does not know of—who hides herself from prying eyes, even in the innermost sanctuary of the domestic temple. Shall I dare to rend the veil that hangs between, and draw her forth?—the priestess dying amid her unholy rites—the sacrificer and the sacrifice? O, we compass sea and land, we brave danger and death, to snatch the poor victim of heathen superstition from the burning pile—and it is well—but shall we not also save the lovely ones of our own household, from immolating on *this* foul altar, not alone the perishing body, but all the worshipped graces of her sex—the glorious attributes of hallowed womanhood!

Imagination's gloomiest reverie never conceived of a more revolting object, than that of a wife and mother, defiling in her own person the fairest work of her God, and setting at nought the holy engagements for which he created her. Her husband—who shall heighten his joys, and dissipate his cares, and alleviate his sorrows? She, who has robbed him of all joy, who is the source of his deepest care, who lives his sharpest sorrow?—These are

indeed the wife's delights—but they are not hers. Her children—who shall watch over their budding virtues, and pluck up the young weeds of passion and vice? She, in whose own bosom every thing beautiful has withered, every thing vile grows rank? Who shall teach them to bend their little knees in devotion, and repeat their Saviour's prayer against "temptation?" She, who is herself temptation's fettered slave? These are truly the mother's labours—but they are not hers. Connubial love and maternal tenderness bloom no longer for her. A worm has gnawed into her heart, that dies only with its prey—the worm, *Intemperance.*

These are not the imaginings of a heated fancy—you who hear me, know that they are not. Nor are they distorted illustrations of rare and solitary cases, which cross us so seldom that they are wondered at, even more than they are deplored. Your own observation will bear me witness, that they are drawn at random, from the too numerous classes, whose talents and virtues are annually lost to their friends by the basilisk charm of the social cup. You behold them at every turn—happy are you, if you do not discover in them once valued companions—thrice happy, if you have never been called to lament over them by your own firesides.

But why are these odious portraits hung up to the sickening gaze? Have the originals come hither to look upon them, and grow ashamed of

their own deformity? Can all the homilies of the pulpit startle him, who has been blind to the tears of affection, and deaf to the prayer of friendship, and shrunk not from the burning touch of shame? No—we dare not hope to reclaim the drunkard—his reformation "comes unlooked for, if it comes at all." The mortal taint is upon him,—in his blood, on his brain—and if he will, he must die, even in his drunkenness. But though many an ill-fated vessel goes to the bottom, men do not forbear to light up the beacon of safety—there are yet gallant barks in the offing, and for them the signal fire must be set on high. There are those about us, now vibrating between right and wrong—they may be snatched from the wo that threatens them; there are those now happy in the sunshine of temperance—they may live to crown our exertions; there are the multitudes, not yet fallen, because not assailed; the strong toilers by the wayside, the busy craftsmen of life's middle walks, the loftier aspirants for wealth and distinction; parents, yet the centre of domestic bliss, children, still the pride of the paternal board; there are the generations springing up around us, with passions uncurbed, and principles unestablished, those who are to come after us, and fill our places, and hand down to their posterity the virtues and vices they learn of us—these call aloud for our untiring

labours, and, by the blessing of Heaven, for some of these our labours shall not be in vain.

Although I have not particularly alluded to the effects of intemperance on the lower orders of society, it is by no means because the intemperate with them are less numerous than may be found among the higher classes—we know that the reverse is the case. Personal observation and well-authenticated documents too plainly prove, that to the poor, drunkenness is verily the pestilence walking in darkness, and the destruction wasting at noon-day. If they can find money for nothing else, they can find it for the liquid fire that destroys them. He who is so destitute that he can neither clothe nor feed his ragged and famishing children, is rarely so reduced that he cannot pay for the guilty indulgences of the dram-shop. "I have seen," says one of my predecessors in this duty, "I have seen ardent spirits, more than once, form with a scanty allowance of bread and meat, the only meal of an almost perishing family. I have seen a mother and her children, hovering in the depth of winter over a few dying embers, half naked and half starved, bread and water the only nourishment of the children, bread and *rum* of the parents. I have seen a little child, squalid and filthy, pinched with cold and want, covered, but not protected from the inclemency of winter, by a few tattered garments, her bare feet on the frozen earth, stealing along

with a broken pitcher, to bring to her parents the liquor which was to serve for the morning's repast—whilst within their comfortless dwelling, gladdened by no blazing hearth, they were waiting in bed, with a drunkard's longing, for that which was to them better than food, clothing, or fire."*

I might warn the poor man of the inevitable consequences of these besotting habits. I might tell him that they will steal away all his homely comforts, load him with debts, lead him to the jail, stretch him on the bed of sickness, and finally press him down to an untimely grave, while his wife and children must be left behind, the shivering pensioners of a grudging world's cold bounty. But I am not now addressing the poor. I speak to you, whom the poor are proud to copy. By portraying some of the evils that are thinning your own ranks, by tracing them to what I believe is their origin, and pointing to what I think is the only certain relief for them, I would incite you to a reformation, that shall not only reach those around you, but descend to those below. If the present race is too far gone, you may at least save some of that which is to come. Man has been truly termed the creature of imitation, and it is equally true, that his disposition to imitate is somewhat aspiring. He will ape a lofty vice, rather than emulate a lowly virtue. This inclination, strong enough, every where, is peculiarly powerful

* *Doctor John Ware*'s Address, 1825.

in a country, the very institutions of which serve to feed it. The pleasant doctrine that all men are free and equal, is thoroughly understood, at least, in one sense, by those whom its exciting spirit never roused to great and noble action.

In this view our subject assumes a fearful political importance. The ruinous consequences of wide-spread intemperance to a people governing themselves, can hardly be overrated. If there be on earth one nation more than another, whose institutions must draw their life-blood from the individual purity of its citizens, that nation is our own. Rulers by divine right, and nobles by hereditary succession, may, perhaps, tolerate with impunity those depraving indulgences which keep the great mass abject. Where the many enjoy little or no power, it were a trick of policy to wink at those enervating vices, which would rob them of both the ability and the inclination to enjoy it. But in our country, where almost every man, however humble, bears to the omnipotent ballot-box his full portion of the sovereignty—where at regular periods the ministers of authority, who went forth to rule, return to be ruled, and lay down their dignities at the feet of the monarch multitude—where, in short, public sentiment is the absolute lever that moves the political world, the purity of the people is the rock of political safety. We may boast, if we please, of our exalted privileges, and fondly imagine that they will

be eternal—but whenever those vices shall abound, which undeniably tend to debasement, steeping the poor and the ignorant still lower in poverty and ignorance, and thereby destroying that wholesome mental equality, which can alone sustain a self-ruled people—it will be found by woful experience, that our happy system of government, the best ever devised for the intelligent and good, is the very worst to be entrusted to the degraded and vicious. The great majority will then truly become a many-headed monster, to be tamed and led at will. The tremendous power of suffrage, like the strength of the eyeless Nazarite, so far from being their protection, will but serve to pull down upon their heads the temple their ancestors reared for them. Caballers and demagogues will find it an easy task to delude those who have deluded themselves; and the freedom of the people will finally be buried in the grave of their virtues. National greatness may survive—splendid talents and brilliant victories may fling their delusive lustre abroad—these can illumine the darkness that hangs round the throne of a despot—but their light will be like the baleful flame that hovers over decaying mortality, and tells of the corruption that festers beneath. The immortal spirit will have gone—and along our shores, and among our hills—those shores made sacred by the sepulchre of the Pilgrim, those hills hallowed by

the uncoffined bones of the Patriot—even there, in the ears of their degenerate descendants, shall ring the last knell of departed Liberty.

I would not, even in anticipation, do my country injustice. I glory in my citizenship. With the exception of the *one* hateful vice, which is spreading its ravages far and wide, we may proudly challenge a comparison with the dominions of the earth. The present, however, is not a time for the silken phrases of self-commendation. This gross and besetting sin, the parent of so many others, *is* a national blot; and if it shows the darker on our scutcheon, that it pollutes so fair a surface, it becomes more imperiously the duty of every patriotic citizen to assist in removing it. Let not our glory and disgrace go hand in hand. When we exultingly proclaim to the decrepit communities of the old world, how far we have outstripped them in liberty, let them not be able to tell us that we have also outstripped them in a vice, which is liberty's most deadly foe. If that be true, which we have been told, let it teach us humility, and excite us to amendment—that though but two hundred years a people, but fifty years a nation, we have already, in this particular, attained a wicked preeminence over kingdoms that had seen centuries come and depart, long before the white sail of Columbus caught the inspiring winds of our western sky.

I have thus imperfectly touched upon some of the evils of intemperance, as they affect man in the life that *is*—but how much more unspeakable do they become, when we consider him as a being born to live forever! It has been remarked of other sins, that as we grow old, if we do not leave them, at least they leave us. Time cools the hot blood of youth, and philosophy assumes the reins that passion has resigned. But this vampyre vice clings the closer, as it draws its captive nearer to the grave; and when it has destroyed the body, sends the stupified soul to its dread account, all-reeking in its unrepented of enormity.

Is it not wonderful, that a creature, glowing with the divinity of his Creator—endowed with energies to control the things of one world, and with attributes that capacitate him for the joys of another—able to bind to his will the elements that surround him, making the winds and the waters the ministers of his pleasure—rifling the caverns of the earth of their unsunned wealth—tracing the stars as they circle away to their hiding-places—exploring the unbounded realms of creation, till he stands in speechless homage at the footstool of creation's Awful Founder—is it not indeed wonderful, that such a being, so rarely endowed, should *dare* to quench the sacred fire that has descended upon him—cumbering the earth he was born to subdue, and forfeiting the Heaven he was ordained to enjoy?—

But I am here invading the holy province of others. This is your field, ye anointed ministers of Him who went about doing good. Ye have the privilege, ye have the command to speak to man of his immortal destiny. Is it glorious to sway the human mind, and is it not more glorious to render it worth being swayed? Is it important to make men believe right, and is it not still more important to make them act well? Is it your duty to point them to Heaven, and is it not doubly your duty to fit them for Heaven's enjoyments? Ye would throw light on the page that Infinite Wisdom has shrouded in darkness—enforce that, also, which he who runs can comprehend. Ye can sharpen and burnish your weapons, and set yourselves in battle array against each other, in defence of your various creeds—unite your conflicting powers, and overthrow the giant sin that wars with every creed. Ye would open the eyes of the blind heathen, and snatch him from the blood-dripping car of his idol—strive also to convert the *christian* idolater, and save him from the wrath of a demon whose touch is worse than death. Warn him of the vice that eats into the soul. Declare unto him the doom pronounced upon the Drunkard. With you are the hearts of the old and the young. On you men look with love, for you are associated with their joys and their sorrows—to you they listen with reverence, for you bear the delegated majesty of the

Most High. Be ye, then, faithful and fearless in this thing—in what ye say—in what ye do. "Take the censer of fire in your hands, and go forth into the camp, and stand between the living and the dead, and stay *this* plague which rages among the people."

And now, is it a hard thing that we ask each other to perform? There are those who never fear to do that which they are conscious is wrong—shall we be afraid to do that which we know to be right? Martyrs have calmly laid their heads on the block, for opinions the truth of which many will always deny—shall we hesitate to protest against habits, the baneful consequences of which all acknowledge? Men waste time and talent and money in schemes, which though successful, end in vexation and vanity—are we unwilling to make an effort for the happiness of those about us, which, even if unsuccessful, will bring us the reward of self-approbation? We love to remember what our Fathers did and suffered, in the ages gone by, and we extol the holy and the bold achievements which secured to us a lovely heritage—shall our children look back to our day, and find nothing to reverence in us? Shall we not at least bequeath them lessons of purity, examples of temperance? These may not win for us the page of history—the orator may not sound our praise in high places—nor the

poet remember us in his glowing anthem ;—but the small, sweet voice of the moralist will testify of us—the blessings of them that were ready to perish may rest upon us—we shall have that within, "which passeth show."

Let me then again press you to the enforcement of the only remedy for this destroying sin. If we would really banish intemperance, we must close the hundred secret avenues through which it winds its way. We must turn our eyes from the pleasant shapes it assumes in its infancy, if we would not look upon it in all its full-grown bloatedness. We must, in a word, give up drinking as a necessary fashion, if we would get rid of drunkenness as a necessary vice. This, too, unlike some good deeds, must be done before men—in the sight of our families, our friends, and the world. Our children, who seldom think that can be wrong, which their parents indulge in, must no longer behold the *strange fire* an every day household sacrifice. Our neighbours, who are anxious to interchange with us the courtesies of hospitality, must from us learn moral boldness enough to thrust the insinuating foe from their tables and firesides. Wherever our influence can be felt, it must be judiciously exerted. It must reach the young—who enter upon life with a blind deference for their seniors, and imbibe their habits long before they are able to weigh the tendency of them. It must

descend to the poor—who are ever ready to copy the manners and practices of those above them. It must spread round to the crowds of imitators, whose most anxious care is, to live *like other people*—and who deem it a very important study to find out what is customary, without ever troubling themselves to ask whether it be right. In this way, in this way alone, can the good work commence—and if then there be any thing left for the law, let those who sit in the seats of authority look to it. They will not fear to follow where we dare to lead.

Every man is a member of some little brotherhood, in which his influence will be felt, his actions imitated. It is here, that even the humblest may do much. Not by ill-timed and boisterous denunciations, against all who may feel the importance of the subject less deeply than himself—but by a meek and unostentatious, yet firm and consistent rejection of those daily and nightly indulgences, which lead to the misery we deplore. He must remember that they whom he would gain over, are not so wicked as they are weak; and that it is not in the severe capacity of a judge that his labours are required, but in the more endearing character of a friend. His strongest persuasions must be those of practice. There is "no lecture so eloquent as the silent lesson of a spotless example." He may not witness sudden and miraculous con-

versions to his faith—he may even sometimes hear the coarse taunt of the scorner, against both his faith and his works. They who are unwilling to do any thing, will tell him that nothing can be done. They who fold up their arms in contented apathy, because the viper has not crawled into *their* bowers, will assure him that nothing need be done. They who deem that the sum of human duty is merely to provide for one's own household, and respect the laws of the land, will try to convince him that nothing ought to be done. But let not all this shake the lover of temperance from his purpose—there is much that should be done, and if he will persevere, at length much may be done. By time and patience, it has been beautifully observed, the leaf of the mulberry tree becomes satin. In good season he will behold the harvest of his labours ripening around him. His gentle entreaties, his mild and judicious zeal

> "Each virtuous mind will wake,
> As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake;
> The centre moved, a circle straight succeeds,
> Another still, and still another spreads;
> Friend, *kindred*, neighbour, first it will embrace,
> His country next, and next all human race."

My friends, be this laudable enterprise ours. Against the common destroyer let us stand boldly forth, in *word* and in *work*. It is these, that like the prophet's prayer and the warrior's valour, must achieve the victory *together*. If there be any here,

who are disposed to look coldly upon our object, as unattainable, let them ask themselves if all the various exhortations of the pulpit are not obnoxious to the same objection. We admit that there will ever be drunkards; but if because we may not hope to keep all men temperate, we must not therefore strive to preserve any, then no longer let the temples of the Most High echo to the voices of his servants—close up the doors of the sacred desk, for there are those who would slumber in their sins beneath, though an archangel should denounce them. All human efforts, however praiseworthy, must be marked by imperfection. It is the badge of earth, and of every thing earthly. It is hung round the neck of man before his first repose on his mother's lap, and it must remain there till his last sleep on the lap of the common mother of all. We cannot entirely get rid of drunkenness—but we can make it so rare a crime that the guilty ones shall stand out, like dark pillars on the road of life, to remind the innocent how far—how very far they have left them behind.

To you, whose call I have obeyed, in coming hither, I say—go on, as you have begun. The health and happiness of individuals, the comfort of families, and the welfare of society call upon you. The fiery serpents of intemperance are abroad in the land—let your example be the symbol of healing, to which the afflicted may look up and live.

What ye say and do, others will imitate. They are now imitating you. Already there is a rustling among the leaves of the forest, and it foretells the rising wind, that shall come in its purity, to cleanse the suffocating atmosphere. Reformation is beginning in the right place—even in Public Opinion. Win but that to your side, and it will do more for you, than all the laws that slumber in the dust of your public archives.

Go on—and may the prayers of good men accompany you, and the blessing of Heaven seal your honourable labours. And when that hour, which must come to us all, shall come to each of you—when lingering on the confines of life and death, the awed and subdued spirit looks back to the scenes that have long faded in the distance—when the hollow applause of the world dies away from the ear, and nothing rises up but the recollection of good and evil deeds—when the weedy garlands of ambition have no freshness for the burning brow, no perfume for the fainting soul—in that hour, if you can remember one fellow traveller, turned from destruction by your influence—the image of that one shall hover round your pillow of suffering, and be to you a ministering seraph, through the final pangs of expiring mortality.